

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-10 CIAE-00

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 EB-08 NRC-07 DODE-00 ERDA-07

SS-15 SP-02 FEA-01 PA-02 PRS-01 PM-05 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 ERDE-00 /112 W

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O R 220955Z AUG 77 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8509

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4248

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SF, MNUC

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA'S COMMENTS ON
NUCLEAR ISSUE

REFS: A) PRETORIA 4246, B) STATE 196580

LAGOS FOR MOOSE AND YOUNG

1. FOLLOWING IS THE RAND DAILY MAIL'S REPORT OF FOREIGN
MINISTER BOTH'S COMMENT ON THE NUCLEAR ISSUE.

2. " RUSSIONS' RUMOURS ARE LIES, SAYS PIK BOTHA"

" THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR. PIK BOTHA,
SAID YESTERDAY THE US HAD MADE INQUIRIES ABOUT RUSSION-
DISSEMINATED RUMOURS THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS ON THE POINT
OF TESTING A NUCLEAR WEAPON.

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" MR. BOTHA SAID THE US AMBASSADOR TO SOUTH AFRICA
HAD BEEN TOLD THE RUMOURS WERE ' WHOLLY AND TOTALLY
UNFOUNDED.'

" MR. BOTHA SAID THE WEST GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER
HAD ALSO RAISED THE ISSUE OF THE SOVIET ALLEGATIONS WHEN
MR. BOTHA MET HIM IN FRANKFURT LAST WEEK.

" OTHER GOVERNMENTS HAVE ALSO APPROACHED US ON THIS

MATTER, MR. BOTHA SAID, POINTING OUT THE RUMOUR ' WAS NOT A NEW STORY'"

" MR. BOTHA CONTINUED: ' IT HAS BEEN ALLEGED FOR YEARS NOW THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING TERRIBLE SEAPONS FROM DEADLY POISONOUS GASES TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS.'

" HOWEVER, HE SAID, ALL THAT WAS NEW WAS THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE WHIPPING UP EMOTIONS FOR THE UN CONFERENCE ON APARTHEID ON LAGOS THIS WEEK.

" THEY WANTED TO EXTENT THE ATTACK ON SOUTH AFRICA FURTHER AND WERE NOW ' FABRICATION AMMUNITION' FOR THAT PURPOSE THE MINISTER SAID.

" MR. BOTHA SAID HE THOUGHT THE CLAIMS WOULD BE REPEATED IN LAGOS.

" I'VE RECENTLY BEEN TOLD BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN AFRICAN COUNTRY THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD ENGAGE IN THIS KIND OF CAMOUFLAGE ACTION IN ORDER TO HIDE THEIR OWN AGGRESSION IN AFRICA.

" APPARENTLY THE RUSSIANS HAVE DECIDED TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR POSITION IN AFRICA BY TAKING THE LEAD AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA IN LAGOS.' MR. BOTHA SAID.

" THE SOVIET CYNICISM WAS APPARENT BY THE FACT THAT LESS THAN TWO MONTHS AGO RUSSIA HAD AGITATED STRONGLY TO HAVE SOUTH AFRICA REMOVED FROM THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY.

" IT WAS SAID AT THE TIME THAT SOUTH AFRIC'S PLACE SHOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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BE TAKEN BY ANOTHER AFRICAN COUNTRY BECAUSE SOUTH AFRICA WAS NOT THE MOST TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED COUNTRY ON THE CONTINENT.

" ON THE OTHER HAND SOUTH AFRICA HAD NOW ADVANCED SO MUCH, IT WAS CLAIMED, THAT IT WAS ON THE POINT OF EXPLODING NUCLEAR BOMBS ' LEFT AND RIGHT', MR. BOTHA SAID.

" THE DIRECTOR OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY BOARD, DR. A.J.A. ROUX, SAID YESTERDAY HE HAD NO COMMENT ON THE MATTER." BOWDLER

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